GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4973
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2000
EXPLOITATION OF MAID SERVANTS
SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of maid servants from India working in Gulf Countries;

(b) whether the Government have received complaints of physical, mental and sexual torture of these maid servants;

(c) if so, the number of such complaints received during the last three years, year-wise;

(d) the action taken by the Government on these complaints; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure the safety of these maid servant?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) The number is estimated at 75000.

(b) Complaints are received from the some Indian housemaids. The majority of complaints related not to physical/sexual abuse but to violations of contractual obligations on the part of employers such as non-payment or delay in payment of salaries, long working hours, inadequate accommodation/food, or refusal of permission to go to India in emergencies.

(c) The total number of complaints of all kinds received from Indian housemaids working in the Gulf countries duringthe last three years are as under:

Year	No. of complaints.
1997	1778
1998	2005
1999	2764

(d) The affected female worker is provided assistance through the Indian Mission/Post in that country. Whenever any instance of ill-treatment, harassment etc. is brought to the notice of the Indian Mission/Post, remedial action is taken to resolve the matter. As per requirement of the situation, and local regulations or practice, the mission takes up the matter with the employer, the local authorities and/or the authorities of the host country. If a case cannot be resolved to the satifaction of the female worker concerned, and she cannot or does not take up alternative employment, efforts are made to send her back to India, with the assistance of the local Indian community.

(e) Government through its diplomatic Missions continuously monitors the working and living conditions of all Indian employees abroad, including maid servants, and engages in regular dialogue with the local authorities to ensure their welfare. The Office of the Protector General of Emigrants (Ministry of labour) regulates the emigration of housemaids under the provisions of the emigration Act, 1983.